ACTION COPY

INCOMING TELEGRAM Department of State

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Action SS

CONTROL: 25477
REC'D: DECEMBER 31, 1966 4:49 A.M.

NNNNVZCZCMJA532JIA807
PP RUEHC RUEHJS
DE RUMJIR 14698/1 3650855
ZNY SSSSS
P 310800Z DEC 66
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY
INFO RUHLHQ/CINCPAC
RUEHJS/JCS
BT
S E C R E T SEONE OF THREE SAIGON 14698

E X D I S

CINCPAC FOR ADMIRAL SHARP

FOR AMBASSADOR LODGE

JOINT EMBASSY/MACV MESSAGE

REF STATE 107551

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/GIS/IPR
REVIEWED BY Ivan Izenberg DATE 11/24/82
PD for XD EXEMPT. DATE
TS AUTH. E.A. ON(S)
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
DECLASSIFIED ☐ RELEASABLE ☑
RELEASE DENIED ☐
PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS

1. ELECTION DATE

A) ELECTION DATE COULD BE ANYTIME FROM AUGUST TO OCTOBER, BUT AT PRESENT TIME WE DO NOT EXPECT IT WILL BE SOONER THAN LATE SEPTEMBER. PRESSURES COULD DEVELOP, HOWEVER, WHICH WOULD SPEED UP PROCESS. IT IS PROBABLE THAT PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION WILL BE HELD IN ADVANCE OF LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS.

B) MAJOR CONTROLLING FACTORS IN FIXING DATE OF ELECTIONS, IN ADDITION TO DESIRES OF DIRECTORATE WHICH REPORTEDLY DOES

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NOT FAVOR EARLY ELECTION, ARE: 1) DATE WHEN CONSTITUTION ACTUALLY WILL BE PROMULGATED (WE ESTIMATE EARLY APRIL) SINCE ELECTIONS MUST BE HELD WITHIN SIX MONTHS THIS DATE; 2) DATE WHEN ELECTION LAW APPROVED AND PREPARATIONS CAN BEGIN (MACHINERY FOR DRAFTING LAW NOT YET ESTABLISHED SO THIS DATE IMPOSSIBLE TO PREDICT); 3) SPEED OF NECESSARY ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS; AND 4) WHETHER PRESIDENTIAL AND ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS HELD SIMULTANEOUSLY. IF THEY ARE TO BE HELD SIMULTANEOUSLY, ADMINISTRATIVE PREPARATIC (INCLUDING FORMATION OR REGISTRATION OF POLITICAL PARTIES AND SCREENING OF CANDIDATES) WILL TAKE MUCH LONGER THAN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS ALONE, FOLLOWED LATER BY

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ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS. IN LATTER CASE, IT WOULD BE AT LEAST THEORETICALLY POSSIBLE HOLD PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN AUGUST, WITH ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS COMING IN SEPTEMBER OR OCTOBER.

2. KY AND THIEU.

A) KY: HE MIGHT BE CHARACTERIZED AS YOUNG, DYNAMIC AND DARING WITH FAIR DEGREE POLITICAL SAVVY, BUT HE IS ALSO CONSIDERED BY MANY VIETNAMESE AS IMPETUOUS AND SOMETHING OF PLAY-

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BOY. HE HAS LEARNED A GREAT DEAL AS PRIME MINISTER, AND HAS SHOWN INCREASING CAPACITY TO MAKE TOUGH DECISIONS AND CARRY THROUGH. HE HAS POPULAR BASE WITH NORTHERNERS, BOTH IN AND OUT OF ARMY AND INCLUDING BUDDHISTS AS WELL AS CATHOLICS. HE SEEMS HAVE FAIR DEGREE PERSONAL APPEAL, ALTHOUGH THERE ARE SIGNS HIS POPULARITY HAS DECREASED DURING RECENT MONTHS. HE WOULD PROBABLY ENCOUNTER TWO CENTERS OF HARD-CORE OPPOSITION WERE HE TO RUN FOR PRESIDENT: CENTRAL VIETNAMESE BUDDHISTS AND MANY SOUTHERN CIVILIAN AND MILITARY LEADERS. SOUTHERNERS ARE NOT SO MUCH ANTI-KY AS THEY ARE AGAINST SOME OF HIS CLOSE SUPPORTERS SUCH AS LOAN AND KHANG, BUT NEVERTHELESS HIS NORTHERN ORIGIN IS REAL POLITICAL LIABILITY. WE BELIEVE IT VERY LIKELY KY WILL RUN, BASED ON SEVERAL RECENT REPORTS FROM PEOPLE CLOSE TO KY WHO SAY THAT WHILE HE HAS NOT YET MADE FINAL DECISION HE SEEMS TO FAVOR RUNNING BUT IS WAITING TO WORK THINGS OUT WITH GENERAL THIEU. HE IS ONLY NORTHERNER WHO COULD POSSIBLY WIN AND IS UNDER PRESSURE FROM HIS FELLOW TONKINESE TO ENTER RACE.

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B) THIEU: HE IS CAUTIOUS, DIGNIFIED AND CALCULATING, WITH GREATER DEGREE OF POLITICAL UNDERSTANDING THAN KY BUT LESS DECISIVE AND LESS DYNAMIC AND WITH LITTLE FLAIR FOR INSPIRING POPULAR ENTHUSIASM. THIEU HAS BEEN CAREFUL TO AVOID TAKING STAND ON CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES, LEAVING TO KY MUCH OF ONUS FOR SUCH POTENTIALLY UNPOPULAR DECISIONS AS DEVALUATION, MOVING ARVN INTO DA NANG TO BREAK "STRUGGLE", REFUSAL RELEASE CATHOLIC POLITICA PRISONERS BEFORE SEPTEMBER 11 ELECTIONS, AND RESOLUTION OF

SO-CALLED "CABINET CRISIS". HE WOULD PROBABLY FACE LESS OPPOSITION THAN KY AND PICK UP SOME SUPPORT FROM SOUTHERNERS AND CENTRAL VIETNAMESE AS WELL AS DAI VIET PARTY, BUT AT SAME TIME LACKS RELATIVELY COHESIVE, SIZABLE POPULAR BASE WHICH KY ENJOYS AMONG NORTHERNERS. NO ONE KNOWS WHETHER THIEU WILL RUN. MOST REPORTS SAY HE HAS NOT MADE UP HIS MIND BUT HE TOLD GENERAL WESTMORELAND HE WOULD DEFINITELY NOT RUN. IT WOULD BE IN KEEPING HIS PAST BEHAVIOURAL PATTERN FOR THIEU TO MAKE AFFIRMATIVE DECISION ONLY IF AFTER CAREFUL ASSESSMENT HE THOUGHT HE HAD EXCELLENT CHANCE FOR SUCCESS.

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C) RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN KY AND THIEU: EXACT NATURE RELATIONSHIP DIFFICULT TO ASSESS, BUT WE BELIEVE THERE IS NO SERIOUS CONFLICT BETWEEN TWO MEN. WE HAVE LITTLE OR NO INFORMATION FROM TWO INDIVIDUALS DIRECTLY CONCERNED AND MOST REPORTS OF DIFFERENCES ARE FROM SOURCES WITH BIAS FOR OR AGAINST ONE OR OTHER. WHILE THEPE SEEM TO BE IMPORTANT DIFFERENCES OF OUTLOOK BETWEEN TWO MEN, THEIR RELATIONSHIP HAS WITHSTOO PRESSURES WHICH MIGHT EASILY HAVE CAUSED OPEN RUPTURE BETWEEN THEM AS WAS CASE WITH PHAN KHAC SUU AND PHAN HUY QUAT. THIS IS PROBABLY DUE TO MUTUAL REALIZATION THAT THEIR INDIVIDUAL BEST INTERESTS AS WELL AS THOSE OF ARVN AND VIETNAMESE NATION DEPEND UPON MODICUM OF COOPERATION AND HARMONY, AS WELL AS CERTAIN DEGREE MUTUAL RESPECT. THIEU UNDOUBTEDLY LOOKS UPON HIMSELF AS THE SENIOR IN THE RELATIONSHIP, WITH SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR MILITARY AFFAIRS AND HIGH POLICY. ON OTHER HAND, HE LEAVES GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND DAY TO DAY DECISION-MAKING TO KY.

D) WHICH WILL RUN: QUESTION OF WHETHER OR NOT ONE OR BOTH MEN WILL RUN FOR PRESIDENCY HAS REPORTEDLY BEEN SOURCE OF

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SOME FRICTION BETWEEN THEM FOR SEVERAL MONTHS. WE DO NOT BELIEVE IT HAS BEEN RESOLVED. INDEED, BUI DIEM TOLD POLITICAL COUNSELOR DECEMBER 29 THAT KY HAD NOT YET TALKED TO THIEU ON THIS POINT DESPITE URGINGS BY BUI DIEM AND OTHERS THAT HE DO SO IN ORDER MAKE FINAL DECISION RUN. DECISION ON WHETHER THEY WILL COMPETE AGAINST ONE ANOTHER, OR ONLY ONE WILL RUN AND OTHER SUPPORT, OPPOSE OR REMAIN UNCOMMITTED WILL DEPEND

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UPON SO MANY SUBJECTIVE FACTORS WE HESITATE PREDICT WHAT IT WILL BE. BOTH, WE BELIEVE, WOULD ENCOUNTER PROBLEM OF LATENT BUT NOTICEABLE AMOUNT OF ANTI-MILITARY SENTIMENT AMONG PUBLIC.

3. PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES.

A) NUMBER OF SERIOUS PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES WILL DEPEND UPON TERMS OF ELECTION LAW (E.G. NOMINATION PROCESS, PRIMARY OR NOT). ANOTHER IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION WILL BE REGIONAL, RELIGIOUS AND PARTY BALANCE OF VARIOUS SLATES, PARTICULARLY FOR OFFICES PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT BUT POSSIBLY PRIME-MINISTER DESIGNATE AS WELL. SOME PROBABLE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES SUCH AS DR PHAN QUANG DAN MIGHT SETTLE FOR VICE PRESIDENCY OR PRIME MINISTERSHIP ON WHAT THEY BELIEVED WOULD BE WINNING SLATE.

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NOTE: ADVANCE COPY TO S/S-O AT 5:18 A.M., DECEMBER 31.
PASSED WHITE HOUSE, CIA 5:18 A.M., DECEMBER 31.

INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State* ACTION COPY

SECRET

CONTROL: 25493
REC'D: DECEMBER 31, 1966
5:08 A.M.

Action
SS
Info

P 310800Z DEC 66
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY
INFO RUHLHQ/CINCPAC
RUEHJS/JCS
BT
S E C R E T SETWO OF THREE SAIGON 14698

E X D I S
CINCPAC FOR SHARP
FOR AMBASSADOR LODGE
JOINT EMBASSY/MACV MESSAGE

B) CANDIDATES LISTED BELOW ARE THOSE WE BELIEVE ARE BOTH SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING QUESTION OF RUNNING AND APPEAR HAVE CHANCE OF OBTAINING REASONABLE NUMBER VOTES.

1) TRAN VAN HUONG, FORMER PRIME MINISTER, WHO APPEARS TO HAVE BEGUN CAMPAIGN BASED ON SOUTHERN CIVILIAN AND MILITARY SUPPORT AND HAS GOOD CHANCE OF ATTRACTING SUBSTANTIAL NORTHERN CATHOLIC SUPPORT (SAIGON 14467). NO INFORMATION YET AVAILABLE ON POSSIBLE VICE PRESIDENTIAL OR PRIME MINISTERIAL CANDIDATES FOR HIS SLATE.

2) PHAN KHAC SUU, CA CHAIRMAN AND FORMER CHIEF OF STATE. NO INFORMATION TO INDICATE HE HAS MADE KNOWN DECISION TO RUN BUT STRONG PROBABILITY HE WILL RUN AND WILL ATTRACT SOUTHERN SUPPORT. POSSIBLY HE MIGHT REACH MEETING OF MINDS WITH HUONG WHEREBY THEY WOULD NOT RUN AGAINST ONE ANOTHER. RUMOR THAT DR PHAN QUANG DAN WILL RUN ON SUU'S SLATE FOR VICE PRESIDENT BUT DOUBTFUL DAN HAS YET MADE SUCH DECISION.

3) CHIEF OF STATE GENERAL NGUYEN VAN THIEU. AS NOTED, WE DO NOT BELIEVE HE HAS YET MADE HIS DECISION ALTHOUGH HE SAYS HE WILL NOT RUN. WE HAVE NO INFORMATION ON POSSIBLE RUNNING MATES. THERE HAVE BEEN REPORTS HE MIGHT HAVE HOA HAO SUPPORT (SAIGON 13920) AND HE SHOULD ALSO HAVE SOME DAI VIET SUPPORT, WERE HE TO RUN.

4) PRIME MINISTER NGUYEN CAO KY. AS NOTED, WE THINK HE WILL PROBABLY RUN WITH SUPPORT OF NORTHERNERS, BOTH CIVILIAN AND MILITARY (ESPECIALLY FROM "BABY TURKS"--YOUNG FIELD GRADE OFFICERS). ONE RUMOR HAS LE PHUOC SANG (HOA HAO) AS VICE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE ON KY SLATE.

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5) DR PHAN QUANG DAN. WE HAVE NO REPORT ON ANY DECISION TO RUN AND BELIEVE HE WOULD BE WILLING SETTLE FOR VICE PRESIDENTIAL OR PRIME MINISTERIAL SLOT WITH SUU OR HUONG OR POSSIBLY ANOTHER PRESILENTIAL CANDIDATE. HOWEVER, HE HAS LONG HELD

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AMBITION TO BE CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND HIS RECENT ESCAPE FROM ASSASSINATION MAY BOOST HIS POPULARITY. HIS POWER BASE IS GIA DINH PROVINCE AND SAIGON AND HE WOULD NOT AUTOMATICALLY HAVE SUPPORT OF ANY OF TRADITIONAL POLITICAL FORCES (CATHOLICS, BUDDHISTS, VNQDD, ETC.).

6) RETIRED GENERAL TRAN VAN DON IS RELIABLY REPORTED TO HAVE BEGUN CAMPAIGN FOR PRESIDENCY, WORKING WITH FORMER PRIME MINISTER PHAN HUY QUAT, FORMER ECONOMY MINISTER NGUYEN XUAN OANH AND POSSIBLY THICH TRI QUANG. HIS SUPPORT WOULD COME FROM SOME SOUTHERNERS AND POSSIBLY CENTREL VIETNAMESE BUDDHISTS. WE INCLINED THINK HE WOULD ACCEPT VICE PRESIDENTIAL POST IF IT WERE OFFERED HIM BY ANY PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE WITH GOOD CHANCE OF WINNING.

7) OTHER POSSIBLE CANDIDATES WHO DO NOT NOW APPEAR TO BE SERIOUS CONTENDERS FOR VARIETY OF REASONS ARE: GENERAL DUONG VAN MINH, GENERAL NGUYEN CHANH THI, FORMER ECONOMY MINISTER AU TRUONG THANH AND DAI VIET LEADER HA THUC KY.

4. ARVN AND PACIFICATION.

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A) ROLE OF GENERAL THIEU: INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO MACV INDICATES THAT GENERAL THIEU ENVISAGES NO PARTICULAR ROLE FOR HIMSELF IN THE REORIENTATION OF ARVN TOWARD PACIFICATION, OTHER THAN THAT WHICH NORMALLY COULD BE EXPECTED OF THE CHIEF OF STATE. THE CHIEF OF THE JOINT GENERAL STAFF, GENERAL VIEN, IS TAKING AGGRESSIVE ACTION IN THE OVERALL REORIENTATION OF ARVN TOWARD SUPPORT OF RD.

B) ARVN REORIENTATION: MACV BELIEVES ARVN ORIENTATION WILL GO BEYOND MERE RETRAINING OPERATION AND WILL RESULT IN

RATHER FUNDAMENTAL REVISIONS PRESENT COMMAND STRUCTURE. COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS FOR ARVN SUPPORT OF RD ARE BEING ESTABLISHED ON PROVINCE BY PROVINCE BASIS. NEW CONCEPTS, ALREADY IN PROCESS OF IMPLEMENTATIONS, INCLUDE ASSIGNMENT OF SOME ARVN MANUEUVER BATTALIONS TO OPERATIONAL CONTROL OF CERTAIN SECTOR COMMANDERS (PROVINCE CHIEFS). HERETOFORE PROVINCE CHIEFS HAVE EXERCISED OPERATIONAL CONTROL--COMMAND--OVER ARVN MANEUVER BATTALIONS ONLY FOR LIMITED PERIODS OF TIME, USUALLY FOR SPECIFIC OPERATIONS. NOW DIVISIONAL COMMANDERS WILL IN EFFECT DETACH

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CERTAIN NUMBER OF BATTALIONS AND ASSIGN THEM ON PERMANENT BASIS TO CERTAIN PROVINCE CHIEFS. (FOR EXAMPLE, WE HAVE LEARNED THAT 7TH DIVISION COMMANDER HAS DESIGNATED FIVE OF HIS 14 MANEUVER BATTALIONS FOR ASSIGNMENT TO FOUR PROVINCE CHIEFS IN THE 7TH DIVISION TAOR, ONE EACH TO KIEN TUONG, DINH TUONG AND GO CONG, AND 2 TO KIEN HOA). BATTALIONS ARE TO BE ASSIGNED TO PROVINCE CHIEFS WHOM THE CBVPS COMMANDER BELIEVES WILL BE ABLE TO DEVOTE SUFFICIENT TIME AND EFFORT TO UTILIZE THEM EFFECTIVELY.

IN CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH REQUIRE MORE TIME AND EFFORT THAN IT IS BELIEVED THE PROVINCE CHIEF CAN PROVIDE (OR PERHAPS WHE... CORPS AND DIVISION COMMANDERS LACK SUFFICIENT CONFIDENCE IN HIM) ARVN UNITS ARE TO BE ASSIGNED TO A TAOR WITHIN WHICH THEY WILL BE EXPECTED TO CONFINE THEIR OPERATIONS. OPERATIONAL CONTROL REMAINS WITH REGIMENTAL COMMANDER, AND THUS WITH DIVISION, BUT UNIT WILL BE EXPECTED TO CONCENTRATE ITS EFFORTS ON SUPPORTING RD WITHIN ITS TAOR. THESE TAOR'S WILL USUALLY CORRESPOND WITH DISTRICT BOUNDARIES (WE EXPECT MOST TAOR'S WILL INCLUDE MORE THAN ONE DISTRICT).

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MACV EXPECTS THAT CLOSER RELATIONS WILL DEVELOP BETWEEN PROVINCE OFFICIALS AND ARVN COMMANDERS AS A RESULT OF THESE INNOVATIONS AND THAT THIS SHOULD CONTRIBUTE SIGNIFICANTLY TO RD. EMBASSY CONCURS BUT BELIEVES THIS IS LESS LIKELY TO OCCUR UNLESS BATTALIONS EARMARKED FOR DIRECT SUPPORT OF RD ARE LEFT IN PLACE LONG ENOUGH SO THAT THE TROOPS AND THEIR COMMANDERS CAN BECOME FAMILIAR WITH THE LOCAL SITUATION. KEY ELEMENT, IN ADDITION TO PROPER DEPLOYMENT OF TROOPS DISCUSSED ABOVE, IS

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OF COURSE QUESTION OF THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARD RD ROLE AND PEOPLE THEY ARE PROTECTING FROM VC.

5. PROMOTION FROM RANKS.

A) RVNAF PROVIDES OPPORTUNITIES WHEREBY QUALIFIED PERSONNEL FROM THE RANKS MAY BECOME COMMISSIONED OFFICERS, THUS (1) RECOGNIZING PROVEN LEADERSHIP, AND (2) PROVIDING INCENTIVE TO NCOS. THERE WERE THREE DISTINCT PROGRAMS DURING CY 1966, WHEREBY QUALIFIED NCOS COULD BE APPOINTED TO THE GRADE OF ASPIRANT, THE LOWEST OFFICER GRADE.

PORTER

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INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State*

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1966 DEC 31 AM 5 49

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Action
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Info

PP RUEHC RUEHJS
DE RUMJIR 14698/3 3650950
ZNY SSSSS
P 310800Z DEC 66
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY
INFO RUHLHQ/CINCPAC
RUEHJS/JCS
BT
S E C R E T FINAL SECTION OF THREE SAIGON 14698

E X D I S

CINCPAC FOR SHARP

FOR AMB LODGE

JOINT EMBASSY/MACV MESSAGE

1) THE SPECIAL OFFICERS CANDIDATE TRAINING COURSE. THIS IS A SPECIAL 16 WEEK COURSE, AND SIX CLASSES WERE PROGRAMMED FOR CY 1966. AMONG OTHER PREREQUISITES, EACH CANDIDATE MUST HAVE AT LEAST TWO YEARS SERVICE, AND AS A MINIMUM, BE IN THE GRADE OF CORPORAL FIRST CLASS. FIVE CLASSES HAVE GRADUATED 1,487 ASPIRANTS, AND CLASS 6, WITH 255 STUDENTS, WILL GRADUATE ON 11 JANUARY 1967.

2) DIRECT APPOINTMENT OF MASTER SERGEANTS FIRST CLASS. JCS ESTABLISHED A CY 1966 PROGRAM FOR THE DIRECT APPOINTMENT TO ASPIRANT OF QUALIFIED MASTER SERGEANTS FIRST CLASS. A TOTAL OF 401 WERE SELECTED WITHIN THE REGULAR FORCE:

(A) ARVN : 351

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(B) VNAF: 26

(C) VNN: 24

IN ADDITION, 100 APPOINTMENTS WERE MADE IN THE REGIONAL FORCE, FOR A CY 1966 RVNAF TOTAL OF 501.

3) SPECIAL BATTLEFIELD COMMISSIONS. A) MASTER SERGEANT FIRST CLASS MAY BE COMMISSIONED AS AN ASPIRANT BASED UPON HIS DEMONSTRATED L[illegible]RSHIP POTENTIAL UNDER COMBAT CONDITIONS. THERE ARE SPECIFIC CRITERIA WHICH MUST BE FULFILLED. DURING

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THE PERIOD 1 JANUARY-30 NOVEMBER 1966, 16 APPOINTMENTS TO ASPIRANTS WERE AWARDED UNDER THIS PROGRAM.

B) A TOTAL OF 2,004 ASPIRANT APPOINTMENTS HAVE RSULTED FROM THESE THREE PROGRAMS DURING CY 1966. CONSIDERING CLASS 6 OF THE SPECIAL OFFICER CANDIDATE TRAINING COURSE, WHICH GRADUATES IN EARLY JANUARY, THE OUTPUT WILL EXCEED 2,200.

C) ALL THREE PROGRAMS WILL CONTINUE DURING CY 1967. THE NUMBER OF ASPIRANT COMMISSIONS PROGRAMMED FOR EACH IS UNKNOWN AT THIS TIME, PENDING FINAL DETERMINATION OF CY 1967 ASPIRANT REQUIREMENTS. BECAUSE OF THE LEVELING OF THE FORCE STRUCTURE, THERE

WILL BE A REDUCED REQUIREMENT IN CY 1967 FOR ASPIRANTS. THEREFORE, THE OUTPUT OF EACH PROGRAM MAY WELL BE LESS THAN FOR CY 1966, EXCEPT POSSIBLY FOR AN INCREASE OF SPECIAL BATTLEFIELD COMMISSIONS.

D) GENERAL WESTMORELAND IS IN STRONG FAVOR OF PROGRAMS WHEREBY QUALIFIED PERSONNEL MAY BE COMMISSIONED FROM THE RANKS. THE MACV PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT ADVISORY EFFORT IS CONTINUING TO EMPHASIZE THESE PROGRAMS. JCS/RVNAF LIKEWISE FAVORS SUCH PROGRAMS, BUT EMPHASIZES THAT PERSONNEL FROM THE RANKS MUST BE TRULY QUALIFIED FOR OFFICER POSITIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES. CONSEQUENTLY, JCS/RVNAF FAVORS THE DIRECT APPOINTMENT AND SEPECIAL BATTLEFIELD COMMISSION PROGRAMS, AS THESE APPLY DIRECTLY TO MASTER SERGEANTS FIRST CLASS, THE HIGHEST NCO GRADE. BY VIRTUE OF EXPERIENCE AND SERVICE, THESE RANKING NCOS HAVE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO DEMONSTRATE THEIR QUALIFICATIONS AND POTENTIAL TO BECOME COMMISSIONED OFFICERS. IT IS ENVISIONED THAT THESE TWO PROGRAMS WILL CONTINUE BEYOND CY 1967. THE RESPONSE FROM THE FIELD TO THE DIRECT APPOINTMENT PROGRAM HAS BEEN ESPECIALLY

GOOD. JCS/RVNAF RECEIVED APPROXIMATELY 650 APPLICATIONS FROM WHICH TO SELECT 250 IN THE SECOND INCREMENT FOR CY 1966.

E) RVNAF HAS BEEN CRITICIZED HISTORICALLY FOR ITS EMPHASIS ON FORMAL EDUCATION FOR OFFICERS. THE OVERWORKED AND IMPRECISE TERM, "DARINISH", HAS BEEN INVOKED FREQUENTLY IN THIS REGARD. CONSIDERING THAT MOST REGULAR FORCE OFFICERS POSSESS ONLY A

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HIGH SCHOOL (12 YEARS) EDUCATION, THEY ARE NOT ALL EQUIPPED PROPERLY FOR HIGHER RESPONSIBILITIES, ESPECIALLY PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT POSITIONS. LIKEWISE, A SIGNIFICANT MORALE FACTOR HAS BEEN THE LENGTHY ASSIGNMENTS MANY OFFICERS HAVE HELD IN FIELD UNITS. TO IMPLEMENT A BALANCED DUTY ROTATION PROGRAM (TO BE INITIATED IN CY 1967), IT IS NECESSARY THAT OFFICERS POSSESS THE POTENTIAL TO DEAL WITH THE COMPLEXITIES OF HIGHER STAFF ASSIGNMENTS, AS WELL AS BEING EFFECTIVE AT LOWER UNIT LEVELS. PROFESSIONAL COMPANY GRADE OFFICERS ARE UNDESIRABLE, IF BY VIRTUE OF THEIR ABILITY THEY ARE NOT SUITED FOR ASSIGNMENTS OTHER THAN AT COMPANY AND BATTALION LEVEL. IF OFFICERS REMAIN IN SUCH ASSIGNMENTS FOR LENGTHY PERIODS THEY TEND TO STAGNATE, LOSE THEIR DRIVE AND ZEAL, AND BECOME LESS EFFECTIVE, WITH ATTENDANT ADVERSE INFLUENCES ON THEIR UNIT'S EFFECTIVENESS.

THEREFORE, THE RVNAF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM, IN ARRIVING AT THE OPTIMAL BALANCE OF SOURCES OF JUNIOR OFFICERS, MUST WEIGH EACH OF THESE CONSIDERATIONS: EDUCATION, ROTATION OF ASSIGNMENTS, UNIT AND STAFF REQUIREMENTS AT ALL LEVELS, AND ADEQUATE PROMOTION OPPORTUNITIES FOR WELL QUALIFIED NCOS AND OFFICERS. THE LONG RANGE VIEW IS CONSIDERED AS WELL AS THE IMMEDIATE. THE COMMISSIONING PROGRAMS OF THE RVNAF, ARVN IN PARTICULAR, ARE COMMENSURATE WITH BALANCING THESE PERTINENT FACTORS.

6. RVNAF AND VC CASUALTIES.

A) RVNAF CASUALTIES: FOLLOWING ARE JCS/RVNAF REPORTED CASUALTIES FOR THE PERIOD 1 JANUARY-1966-30 NOVEMBER 1966:

	KIA	WIA	MIA	TOTAL
ARVN	3,799	8,515	531	12,845
REGIONAL FORCE	3,115	3,590	236	6,941
POPULAR FORCE	3,738	5,027	1,661	10,426
TOTAL	10,652	17,132	2,428	30,212

PRIOR TO 1 OCTOBER 1966, RVNAF REPORTED AS WIA ONLY THOSE

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PERSONNEL WHOSE WOUND WAS SUFFICIENTLY SEVERE TO REQUIRE HOSPITALIZATION; CONSEQUENTLY, THE ACTUAL NUMBER OF PERSONNEL WOUNDED IN ACTION DURING CY 1966 EXCEEDS SUBSTANTIALLY THE NUMBER WIA REFLECTED IN THE ABOVE DATA. IN RESPONSE TO A MACV REQUEST, RVNAF INSTITUTED ON 1 OCTOBER 1966, A REVISED CASUALTY REPORTING SYSTEM COMPARABLE TO THE US SYSTEM THAT REPORTS ALL CATEGORIES OF WOUNDED, I.E., LIGHTLY WOUNDED AND SERIOUSLY WOUNDED IN ACTION. SINCE RVNAF WIA DATA FOR CY 1966 IS NOT COMPARABLE WITH US WIA DATA, IT SHOULD BE USED WITH CAUTION.

B) VC CASUALTIES INFLICTED: RVNAF JCS DOES NOT REPORT A BREAKOUT OF CASUALTIES INFILCTED BY ARVN, RF AND PF, BUT RATHER A TOTAL CASUALTY FIGURE. THE OFFICIAL MACV J2 TOTAL RVNAF-INFLICTED VC/NVA KIA FOR THE PERIOD 1 JANUARY 1966 THROUGH 30 NOVEMBER 1966 IS 27,754. MACV MAINTAINS ESTIMATES GATHERED FROM VARIOUS SOURCES OF ENEMY CASUALTIES INFLICTED BY ARVN AND RF/PF, AND CONSIDERS THESE DATA TO BE REASONABLE EFFECTIVENESS INDICATORS. THE MACV ESTIMATES FOR THE PERIOD 1 JANUARY 1966 THROUGH 30 NOVEMBER 1966 RESULT IN THE FOLLOWING FAVORABLE KILL RATIONS:

1) ARVN. 3.4: 1

2) RF/PF. 2.7: 1

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NOTE: ADVANCE COPY TO S/S-O AT 6:20 AM 12/31/66
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